

religious experience, or, as we might term it, the personal, the psychological factor. The religious experience of the individual soul was, indeed, responsible for much of the activity of a Luther, as of a Hus, a Wicklif. It shows us the revolt of the individual mind and soul from a traditional creed which, though sanctioned by all the prestige and power of the Church, could not satisfy the individual craving for truth and peace. It shows us, too, the revolt of conscience from the trafficking in sacred things which formed for the official hierarchy so large a part of religion. It brought the individual heart and conscience into direct relation with the Almighty, apart from priest or Church, and thereby called into play that element of personal conviction—conviction of personal sin, of personal justification by faith—based on the Bible and utterly incompatible with the artificial authority of pope or hierarchy. The experience of a Luther in his cell at Erfurt, struggling through a storm of doubt and despair to the haven of justification by faith, is, from this point of view, significant of much for the revolutionary trend of the age. In such a strong personality it was the harbinger of a revolution which could only end in the subversion of the mediaeval Church in other parts of the empire besides Saxony. Without the spiritual struggle in the monk's cell at Erfurt there would have been no reformer of Wittenberg, and, though the reformer of Wittenberg profited by all the elements that made for reform, the movement, as far as he could influence it, remained essentially theological, spiritual. And if Luther narrowed it in accordance with his own personal experience, he at the same time lent it the intensity of the religious crusade. It was the psychological element, I repeat, that first and foremost made the Reformation "go" in Germany and other lands. In the case of Luther, as of other great religious leaders, the inward preceded the outward struggle—the searching of heart, the consequent feeling of estrangement from God, the conflict of doubt and despair, the study of the Scriptures, the apprehension of some great verity—in this case the doctrine of justification by faith,—the resultant force of conviction and the daring to do and suffer. It was this that made the martyrs of the sixteenth century, this that gave men and women by the thousand the courage to face the stake, and submit their